

ARS Chief Information Officer

Responsibility

The CIO is responsible for ARS-wide information technology policy and management, focusing on agencywide information data management, communications systems, evaluation of technology, and compliance with Federal statutes, including system and information security. The CIO will represent ARS IT issues to the Department, serve as a catalyst for design and implementation of new and innovative organizational IT capabilities, and communicate, both internally and externally, the role of information systems in program delivery, information resources, and mission support.

Organizational Placement

The ARS CIO will be a senior executive (SES), report to the ARS Administrator, and function as an equal partner with other senior officials in decisionmaking with regard to information technology policy and issues. The CIO will be a member of the Administrator's Council.

Duties

- a. Establish ARS-wide Information Technology policies to promote the effective use of IT in support of the research mission.
- b. Develop ARS-wide IT plans and the IT budget (for example, strategic IT plan, capital planning and investment control, support for Information Technology Investment Review Board). Manage the implementation of these IT plans and budgets.
- c. Represent ARS within the USDA and Federal IT communities.
- d. Develop policies and standards for the electronic dissemination of ARS information through ARS websites (including the ARS webmaster role).
- e. Oversee the development, enhancement, and maintenance of business, data, and technical information systems.
- f. Manage, operate, and enhance agencywide IT infrastructure components (for example, telecommunications, information security).
- g. Develop appropriate IT standards for use in both program and administrative units.

- h. Define standard methods to be used ARS-wide for structured analyses of ARS processes and information needs (for example, business area analyses). Define project management standards and methodologies to be used for major IT projects. Oversee the conduct of these major projects.
- i. Serve as the ARS Year 2000 Executive Sponsor and oversee the Year 2000 compliance effort.
- j. Conduct research and analysis of emerging information technologies that can enhance both the conduct of research and the delivery of research results to ARS customers.
- k. Oversee and coordinate the operation of ARS IT units.
- l. Develop and implement an IT education and training program to establish and maintain core competencies among ARS managers, technical staff, and information technology users.

CIO Office Structure

The CIO will supervise a professional and technical staff that will provide program and policy oversight and technical expertise for agencywide information systems. The focus will be in four areas: communications, policies and procedures, IT security, and innovative uses of IT in the research mission.